Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5180th meeting

Monday, 16 May 2005, 3.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Ms. Løj	(Denmark)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	France	Mr. Poirier
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Ozawa
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Smirnov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Holliday

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

End of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2005/310)

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05-34445 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

End of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (S/2005/310)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Indonesia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Portugal and Timor-Leste in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/310, which contains the end of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. I now give the floor to Mr. Annabi.

Mr. Annabi: Thank you, Madam President, for giving me this opportunity to introduce the Secretary-General's end of mandate report on the United Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) (S/2005/310) and to provide an update on the preparations for the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), which was established under Security Council resolution 1599 (2005) of 28 April.

During the period covered in the Secretary-General's report, there were a few notable political developments. Local elections were conducted in a peaceful and orderly manner in the eastern districts of Timor-Leste on 17 and 23 March. Although the ruling Fretilin party fared well, independent and opposition candidates won a significant number of seats, especially in the districts of Lautem and Monatuto.

Another notable development was the organization by church leaders of a large demonstration outside the Government building in Dili in response to a Government proposal to designate religious education as an optional subject in some primary schools across Timor-Leste. The demonstration, which lasted 20 days, with numbers oscillating between a few hundred and several thousand, remained largely peaceful.

On the advice of the UNMISET civilian police, the Timorese national police exercised restraint, opening and maintaining lines of communication with the organizers of the demonstration. The Government also adopted an overall conciliatory approach towards the protest. A joint declaration was eventually signed by Prime Minister Alkatiri and the two bishops of Timor-Leste on 7 May, recognizing that religious education should be included as a regular discipline in the school curriculum, with attendance subject to parental wishes. The demonstration thus came to an end with participants dispersing peacefully shortly after the signing of the joint declaration.

Relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia continued to improve, culminating in the visit of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia to Timor-Leste on 8 and 9 April. During that visit, the Foreign Ministers of Timor-Leste and Indonesia signed

the Provisional Agreement on the Borderline, which came into effect on 8 May and defines about 96 per cent of the entire land border. Most of the remaining 4 per cent of the border relates to the Oecussi enclave.

The relationship between the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) and the Timorese Border Patrol Unit (BPU) also continued to develop with assistance from the UNMISET military liaison group. On 21 April, however, the BPU exchanged fire with Indonesian military personnel, who were reportedly pursuing a group of smugglers at the border between the two countries. During the exchange of fire, one Indonesian soldier received a gunshot injury to the leg. The Timorese police and the TNI are conducting separate investigations to ascertain the full circumstances of the shooting. UNMISET's military liaison officers have facilitated two meetings between the BPU and the TNI to exchange information, and they continue to assist both sides to conduct an impartial investigation. However, the TNI cancelled a third meeting with the BPU, indicating that it would not participate in further talks with the BPU until the Timorese police were prepared to share the results of their investigation.

That incident highlights the continuing need for a United Nations presence to facilitate interaction between the Border Patrol Unit and the Indonesian military. Further training assistance is also required to support the development of the Border Patrol Unit and to enable it to assume full responsibility for contacts with its Indonesian counterparts by 20 May 2006, when UNOTIL's mandate comes to an end.

Similarly, despite the professionalism displayed during the recent demonstration in Dili, the Rapid Intervention Unit still relies to a large extent on the advice of UNMISET's civilian police component. Other specialized units of the Timorese police, such as the Police Reserve Unit and the immigration and marine units, also require further training assistance to become fully self-sufficient in the performance of their tasks.

With regard to Timor-Leste's State institutions and administration, further progress was achieved towards their consolidation, with assistance from UNMISET civilian advisers. Local ownership has been enhanced, especially in the finance sector. The functioning of the judicial system, however, continues to depend on the support of international advisers who provide legal advice to the Government and training for judicial officials and who still have to perform certain key line functions.

In that context, the decision of the Security Council to authorize a one-year follow-on mission in Timor-Leste will enable the United Nations to make a further contribution towards addressing the country's outstanding needs for assistance.

I visited Timor-Leste from 26 April to 2 May, and I can assure members that, although Security Council resolution 1599 (2005) does not fully respond to the expectations of the Timorese Government, they welcomed its adoption and the further assistance it entails for the continued development of Timor-Leste's State institutions and internal security agencies.

During my stay in Timor-Leste, I had the opportunity to discuss the UNOTIL mandate implementation plan with the Timorese Government and the UNMISET leadership. Some of its main features are included in the report before the Council. Meanwhile, the allocation of the 45 approved civilian adviser posts to the various Timorese State institutions has been finalized in consultation with the Government of Timor-Leste.

UNMISET is currently reviewing the profiles of the international advisers who are deployed in Timor-Leste to evaluate the extent to which they match the new requirements. For those who match the new requirements, their retention for another year has been recommended. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the current pool of advisers does not include the skills required for some 23 new positions out of the 45 authorized. Those will have to be advertised. All current advisers will remain in place until the new ones have been deployed, to avoid gaps in assistance and to ensure a smooth transition. The job descriptions for all the adviser posts are available to interested Member States.

With regard to the 40 police advisers authorized under resolution 1599 (2005), their primary task will be the provision of targeted training to the specialized units of the Timorese police, including the Rapid Intervention Unit, the Police Reserve Unit, the immigration unit, the marine unit and the national security unit. The training will cover areas ranging from riot control techniques and the use and maintenance of fire arms, to immigration and human trafficking, navigation skills and close protection.

Most training will be implemented through conducting courses on the training of trainers in order to ensure a widespread and sustainable transfer of skills. Specialized training will also be provided to the Border Patrol Unit (BPU) of the Timorese police. For that purpose, resolution 1599 (2005) authorizes the deployment of 35 additional advisers, 15 of whom will be military advisers.

As indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, the other 20 positions will be filled by police training advisers, who will focus on imparting policing skills to the Border Patrol Unit. These skills will include border area community policing, evidence gathering and suspect handling, as well as knowledge of immigration law and customs legislation, communications skills and reporting procedures. The 15 military advisers will assist the 20 additional police advisers in the training and mentoring of the BPU in the area of border management. To that end, a joint concept of operations has been developed, which provides for the police and military advisers to be co-located on the three border areas of Bobonaro, Suai and Oecussi.

The UNOTIL military advisers will focus on coordinating contacts between the BPU and the Indonesian military, including through regular inter-command and border meetings. The aim of this joint assistance programme is to enable the BPU to assume full border management responsibility and to interact independently with the Indonesian TNI at the appropriate levels by May 2006.

As in the case of the civilian advisers, some of the existing police advisers will be retained, while others will be replaced to meet the new requirements for specialized training. In that connection, a selection of those police advisers who possess the appropriate skills for continued service under UNOTIL has already been completed. Similarly, some of the current military officers will remain in Timor-Leste for a few weeks beyond 20 May in order to ensure a smooth transition from UNMISET to UNOTIL.

As Council members are aware, resolution 1599 (2005) did not authorize the deployment of the 144-strong backup security force recommended in the 18 February 2005 report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99).

During my recent visit to Timor-Leste I had the opportunity to travel to the border area, where I was briefed by the UNMISET contingents deployed there on the implications of their imminent withdrawal. It is clear that their departure will create some gaps. Not only did they provide, by their presence, a significant deterrent to criminal activities and a reassuring presence, they also ensured — through the services of the engineering unit — the maintenance of the land route from Dili to the border. That land route is expected to become impassable without such intervention, especially during the rainy season.

The services of the military component's level-two medical unit will also be missed by both United Nations personnel and the local communities. In addition, the removal of UNMISET's troops could have implications for the security of United Nations personnel. Consultations will therefore be undertaken with the Government of Timor-Leste, as well as with neighbouring countries, with a view to putting in place, on a contingency basis, the arrangements necessary to ensure the security of United Nations staff deployed to Timor-Leste.

While in Timor-Leste, I also had the opportunity to be briefed on the serious crimes process, and to meet with staff from the Serious Crimes Unit, the Defence Lawyers Unit and the Special Panels for serious crimes. I wish to note that, according to all those who are familiar with their work, they have done a very professional job under difficult and challenging circumstances. However, as Council members are aware, in accordance with resolution 1543 (2004), adopted on 14 May 2004, the serious crimes process is to be terminated in a few days, on 20 May 2005.

In the meantime, as indicated in the report before the Council, the Secretary-General has established a Commission of Experts which is conducting a review of the prosecution of serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste in 1999. The Commission of Experts has written to the Secretary-General to request that the liquidation of the Serious Crimes Unit be suspended until the findings of the Commission have been submitted and the Security Council has had a chance to consider them. It is expected that the Commission of Experts will submit its report by the end of this month, following the Commission's upcoming visit to Jakarta, which is scheduled to take place from 18 to 20 May. In the meantime, 10 staff members of the Serious Crimes Unit will be retained during UNMISET's liquidation phase in order to ensure that a complete copy of all records compiled by

the Serious Crimes Unit is preserved in accordance with paragraph 9 of resolution 1599 (2005).

In conclusion, let me say that while most of the credit for the remarkable progress achieved in Timor-Leste must be given to the Timorese leaders and people, there is no doubt that UNMISET, and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor before it, have made a key contribution to this historic process. More needs to be done, and UNOTIL will do its best to make a further contribution over the next 12 months to the peacebuilding efforts of the United Nations in Timor-Leste.

However, further generous support from the international community will remain indispensable in order to consolidate the remarkable gains made so far in building sustainable State institutions and to enable the people of Timor-Leste to achieve the stable and democratic State that they have pursued with such determination and courage.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for his statement.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): Madam President, I wish to thank you for convening this public meeting on Timor-Leste, a neighbour in the region, at a time when that country is once again at an important juncture in its process of establishing a democratic, secure and viable State. I also wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his briefing today on the drawdown process of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), and on how the mandate given to the follow-on mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), will be implemented.

While appreciating the significant gains that have been achieved through the determination and resolve of the Timorese people with the support and contribution of the international community in the nation-building process of Timor-Leste, we share the Secretary-General's conclusion that more remains to be done, and that further generous support will be indispensable if the remarkable gains achieved so far are to be sustained and built upon in the future.

On 28 April 2005, the Security Council adopted by consensus resolution 1599 (2005) authorizing UNOTIL as the successor mission to UNMISET. That change in the character of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, from peacekeeping to a transitional special political mission, is a recognition of the significant strides that have been made in establishing a generally calm, stable and peaceful security environment in Timor-Leste and of the important political achievements in that country.

Those political achievements include the successful holding of local elections in three eastern districts, progress in institution-building — particularly the endorsement of Timor-Leste's ombudsman for human rights and justice — and further improvement in the relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia — such as the signing of the Provisional Agreement on the Borderline and the establishment of the Truth and Friendship Commission. In that connection, my delegation believes there is ample opportunity for complementarity between the work of the Truth and Friendship Commission and the Commission of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to effectively address the need for justice in connection with the serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste in 1999.

As one of the contributors of personnel to UNMISET, my country stands ready to continue to provide the support necessary for the implementation of the mandate of UNOTIL. We welcome the Secretary-General's comprehensive identification of the areas where UNOTIL resources will be applied to build the capacity of the public institutions of Timor-Leste in the areas of justice, human rights, national police and other aspects of public administration. My delegation also welcomes the significant role of the various agencies of the United Nations system that are now providing support to Timor-Leste, and that will continue to do so in the transition period, alongside UNOTIL, for an even greater role as Timor-Leste moves on to its sustainable development framework. However, my delegation notes two of the Secretary-General's observations, which have also been pointed out by Assistant Secretary-General Annabi.

First, it will be necessary for the international community to seek alternative ways to meet a number of important requirements in implementing the mandate of UNOTIL. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the steps that the Secretary-General has proposed in his report to ensure that continuity is preserved in important and critical tasks whose conclusion will occur after the end of UNMISET's mandate.

Secondly, beyond the support provided through UNOTIL, further international assistance will be essential to ensure sustainable progress. In particular, my delegation notes the Secretary-General's concern regarding the need for assistance to promote the stability of the country and for contingency arrangements to secure the safety of United Nations personnel.

In that regard, my delegation would like to request that, in its reports to the Council, UNOTIL point to developments in the consultations to be undertaken to secure bilateral and multilateral assistance with regard to the two concerns of the Secretary-General that I have just mentioned.

Finally, my delegation also wishes to acknowledge and commend the tireless efforts of Special Representative Hasegawa, together with his staff at UNMISET, as well as the support they have given to the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste as they overcome the daunting challenges of Timor-Leste's nation-building.

Mr. Ozawa (Japan): Thank you, Madam President, for convening this very timely public meeting as Timor-Leste makes the transition from the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), a peacekeeping operation, to the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), a special political mission focusing on peacebuilding.

At the outset, we note with satisfaction the tangible achievements and progress made during UNMISET's so-called final consolidation phase over the past year, especially the improvements seen in the security situation, State institutions and capacities and in the promotion of democracy and human rights. The recent peaceful resolution of the demonstrations initiated by church leaders, as described in the Secretary-General's report (S/2005/310), exemplifies the consolidation of democracy in Timor-Leste. We also highly commend the recent strengthening of Timor-Leste's relations with neighbouring countries, including Indonesia.

Recognizing the continuing need for assistance from the international community for institutional capacity-building in Timor-Leste, including in the areas of the judiciary and the police, my Government welcomes the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1599 (2005), authorizing the establishment of UNOTIL.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, and his staff in UNMISET for their unstinting efforts to assist the Government and the people of Timor-Leste in moving the peace and development process forward. We expect that the United Nations, other international organizations and Member States will continue to provide assistance for nation-building in Timor-Leste for the remaining one-year period, with UNOTIL at the centre. The coming year will represent the final demonstration of the direct contribution of the United Nations to Timor-Leste. In order to make that effort a success, Japan will provide strong and sustained support in Timor-Leste. UNOTIL, in our view, should fulfil a coordinating role in order to effectively combine all bilateral and multilateral assistance for the future sustainable development of Timor-Leste.

Japan, as a friend in Asia, has participated substantively in the efforts to assist Timor-Leste in its process of maintaining peace and consolidating the gains of peace, through UNMISET and other multilateral and bilateral frameworks. At the Timor-Leste and development partners meeting held in Dili in April, Japan pledged to continue and strengthen, our bilateral support to Timor-Leste, which has included dispatching experts for human-resources training and institutional capacity-building.

Finally, my Government believes that peacekeeping operations must have clear completion strategies. Recipient countries of such operations should keep that point in mind and make the utmost effort to attain self-sufficiency. In that regard, Timor-Leste offers a significant example of a country in which the completion strategy is being accomplished through the tireless efforts of the United Nations and the recipient country. Japan hopes to see other peacekeeping operations redouble their efforts to fulfil their mandates in accordance with completion strategies appropriate to the specific situations on the ground.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his end of mandate report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) (S/2005/310). I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his briefing.

In a few days, the Government and the people of Timor-Leste will celebrate the third anniversary of their independence. Over the past three years, with the help of the international community, the people of Timor-Leste have overcome every difficulty and have taken encouraging initial steps in various areas of nation-building. Timor-Leste recently conducted a number of local elections and dealt appropriately with domestic difficulties and problems. Its relations with neighbouring countries have been improving and are developing. We share with the Government and the people of Timor-Leste a deep sense of achievement in connection with those accomplishments. We firmly believe that an independent and free Timor-Leste will continue to demonstrate vigour and vitality as it moves down the path of peaceful nation-building.

It must be noted that those achievements reflect the hard work and the contribution of UNMISET over the past three years. UNMISET has lived up to its mandate and accompanied the new-born country in weathering all the vicissitudes inherent in nation-building. It has completed its mandate in an excellent manner. It has earned credibility for the United Nations and has been commended by the people of Timor-Leste and from all sides. In that connection, I would like to express gratitude and pay tribute to all the members of UNMISET and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his predecessors.

Although the mandate of UNMISET is about to end, the United Nations and the international community at large will continue to assist Timor-Leste. As the Secretary-General notes in his report (S/2005/310), the next steps towards institution-building can be pursued through robust capacity-building activities. We hope that, from the outset, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), which is soon to be established, will be clear about its direction and will focus on transferring management experience and other skills to ensure that a fully independent professional Timorese management team is in place at an early date.

The Government and the people of Timor-Leste have repeatedly stated that, in the interest of long-term stability, they will forge good-neighbourly cooperative relations with neighbouring countries and will properly address pending issues. That will truly be in the interest of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, and it will also help foster stability and development in the region. The international community must respect and support that decision by the Timor-Leste Government.

I wish in conclusion to call upon the international community to continue to lend its attention and support to Timor-Leste to help it make progress in peaceful nation-building.

Mrs. Papadopoulou (Greece): Today's open debate is, for once, about a case with a happy ending. The mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) is coming to a successful close. We wish to express our deep appreciation to the Mission in general and to its personnel, and more particularly to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa. Their dedication, efficiency and professionalism have been exemplary. Thanks to UNMISET, Timor-Leste has managed to achieve a level of stability that will allow it, from now on, to focus on building its institutions and improving the well-being of its people.

Greece fully associates itself with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

Timor-Leste has travelled a long way since independence, in May 2002, due mainly to the determination and efforts of its citizens and the steadfast commitment of the international community. UNMISET has provided critical support in that long journey. The establishment of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) constitutes a reaffirmation of our commitment to seeing this journey fully completed.

There is still work to do. We are pleased to see the continuous strengthening of relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, proof of which was the recent visit of the Indonesian President to Timor-Leste. We are also pleased to see other encouraging developments, such as progress in establishing Timor-Leste's legal framework. But dealing with the difficult problems of the past, especially human rights abuses and the issue of fighting impunity, is still an open chapter.

Greece has supported the Secretary-General's proposals regarding the reaction of the international community to the request of the Timorese authorities for help. At the same time, we strongly believe in the value of the Security Council's unanimity. The decision to establish UNOTIL was adopted unanimously.

Therefore, we must now shift our focus onto UNOTIL and the fulfilment of its mandate: to actively support critical democratic institution-building, particularly with respect to the police, and to provide training in the fields of democratic governance, the rule of law and human rights. Building a stable and secure democracy to foster economic development and social progress is a goal the international community shares with the Timorese people.

As Timor-Leste moves to the next chapter, the challenge is to consolidate the progress achieved so far and pave the way towards a better future of peace, stability and prosperity for the people of the country and for the region as a whole. In that respect, UNOTIL's role is very important, and we stand ready to provide it with all the necessary means and support.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): Thank you, Madam President, for convening this open meeting on Timor-Leste.

We would like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi and to commend him for introducing the fine report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/310) reviewing the final activities of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and updating us on preparations for the establishment of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), as recently authorized by the Security Council. Tanzania continues to fully support the work of the United Nations in Timor-Leste.

We are encouraged by the positive developments that have been recorded in Timor-Leste over the past three months. Democracy has been further strengthened by the holding of local elections in several districts, small hurdles here and there having been overcome. It is also encouraging to note a leadership capacity to peacefully resolve potentially divisive differences, as was the case with the settlement of the recent controversy over the teaching of religion in schools.

The building of key State institutions, especially the judicial system, takes time. We wish to commend the speedy progress being made in laying the groundwork for the delivery of justice in Timor-Leste, as this is an important element in the continuing effort to rebuild and establish the rule of law in the country.

We note with appreciation the cooperation extended by both Timor-Leste and Indonesia to the independent Commission of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to review the prosecutions of previous human rights violations. We trust that the report of the Commission of Experts will strengthen the work of the Truth and Friendship Commission recently established by the two countries.

Strengthening relations between Timor-Leste and neighbouring Indonesia is a priority. The visit to Timor-Leste by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on 8 and 9 April and his commitment to resolve outstanding issues between the two countries, covering border security, maritime boundaries and the status of Timor-Leste refugees residing in Indonesia, constitute a very positive act of understanding, reconciliation and good-neighbourliness. Expanded bilateral cooperation is key for resolving residual issues to the benefit of the two countries. We wish to pay tribute to this encouraging high-level development and hope that this cooperation will be extended to cover outstanding sensitive issues, including the prosecution of serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste.

We note with satisfaction the step-by-step growth of Timorese State institutions, realizing full well that uninterrupted international support will continue to be required beyond UNMISET to ensure the growth of a viable State.

The one-year United Nations follow-on mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), which will focus on knowledge and skills transfer, marks an important step towards full Timorese ownership of the nation-building process. While thanking all those who contributed to the success of UNMISET, we welcome UNOTIL; we should ensure that it is equally successful in its follow-on mandate. The Secretary-General has signalled an anticipated shortfall of required resources under UNOTIL, which will need to be bridged by the international community. The additional resources will further stabilize the security of Timor-Leste and strengthen its democratic governance institutions. The call by the Secretary-General should be heeded, with a timely and adequate response.

In the face of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, among the problems that continue to plague Timor-Leste, nation-building efforts can stumble. External support to help fight those problems will continue to be needed even after the conclusion of UNOTIL's mandate.

A combination of popular support, energetic leadership, a focused national development strategy and democratic governance has set Timor-Leste on the trajectory towards becoming a vibrant and prosperous country. Continuing international support is required for the specific objective of consolidating the pillars of statehood and the path of sustainable development, which Timor-Leste has already established and clearly defined.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): I would like to start by joining previous speakers in expressing appreciation for the Secretary-General's latest report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). I would also like to commend Mr. Annabi for his briefing, which once again illustrated UNMISET's good performance in discharging its mandate.

I shall be very brief. Romania, as an acceding country, aligns itself fully with the statement to be made shortly by Ambassador Hoscheit on behalf of the European Union.

Regarding the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) — the follow-on special political mission in Timor-Leste — Romania upholds the approach reflected in resolution 1599 (2005). Romania deems it a sound balancing act between, on the one hand, the need to acknowledge the completion of the mandate and fulfilment of the purposes of a successful United Nations peacekeeping operation and, on the other, the requirement of continued United Nations support to prevent precious post-conflict achievements from falling victim to persistent challenges.

We thus noted with satisfaction the indications in the report of significant progress in terms of stability, development and the strengthening of democracy and State institutions in Timor-Leste. Those are, to a large extent, attributable to the work accomplished by UNMISET. We are also encouraged by the continuous improvement of cooperation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, which, it is hoped, will bring about further progress in the resolution of outstanding issues, including the completion of the land border delineation.

At the same time, we concur with the evidence presented in the Secretary-General report about the remaining challenges. We do not wish to elaborate unnecessarily on them, other than to re-emphasize the need for continued international and bilateral assistance to Timor-Leste, with the goal of its achieving full self-reliance. The United Nations has a central role to play within that framework. The mandate crafted for UNOTIL — that of a new mission with a predominantly political and civilian dimension, retaining, as the same time, a reasonable presence in terms of military advisers — is adequately fine-tuned to address those requirements and expectations.

I would like to make a final comment about Romania's position regarding efforts to bring an end to impunity in relation to serious human rights violations of 1999. We have welcomed the establishment of the Secretary-General's Commission of Experts, as well as the agreement reached between the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia on the setting up of a Truth and Friendship Commission. The two measures have the potential to make a difference within the overall effort to put an end to impunity. We encourage coordination between the two Commissions. At the same time, it is important that all Member States cooperate with their work.

Mr. Poirier (France) (*spoke in French*): We fully associate ourselves with the statement to be made later by the Permanent Representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. I will restrict myself to just a few brief comments.

First, we congratulate the people and the authorities of Timor-Leste on the progress made in that country in the three years since independence. State institutions have been strengthened, and democracy is growing.

Secondly, as the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) is preparing for the handover of its mission, we would like to join our colleagues in congratulating the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, and his staff for their decisive contribution to its success.

Thirdly, while the Timorese people have the primary responsibility for ensuring long-term stability, the United Nations, as Mr. Annabi has said, will continue to play an essential supporting role through the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). We have every confidence in the continued action of the Secretariat during the peace consolidation phase. I note that this sets a good example prior to the debate that we will have here on this subject in a few days' time.

Finally, I would like to underscore with satisfaction the continuing improvement of relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours, first and foremost Indonesia. The visit of the President of Indonesia and the agreement that has been signed relating to 96 per cent of the land border is testimony to that. We will continue to closely follow future progress on remaining border issues. We will continue to attach the greatest importance to the work of the Commission of Experts on serious crimes committed in 1999.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): We, too, would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for his outstanding briefing on the end of mandate report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), established by the Secretary-General. We are grateful for the information that he has provided with regard to the setting up of the United Nations Office in Timor Leste (UNOTIL). We welcome the speed with which arrangements were made to bridge the withdrawal of UNMISET and the establishment of the follow-on special political mission.

Although UNOTIL's strength is below the level requested by the Timorese authorities and recommended by the Secretary-General in his report in document S/2005/99, its creation and its mandate as defined in resolution 1599 (2005) give concrete expression to the will of the international community to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of the international presence in the new phase that is just beginning — the transfer of powers and the consolidation of what has been achieved since the independence of Timor-Leste.

We pay tribute to UNMISET and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the excellent work that has been done in support of reconstruction and the strengthening of the human and institutional capacity of Timor-Leste. We share the pride expressed by the Secretary-General at the invaluable contribution made by the United Nations to the building of the Timorese State. We pay tribute to the determination of the people and the Government of Timor-Leste to consolidate peace and stability in the country. We welcome the many important actions taken recently with a view to strengthening the country's legal framework and to stabilizing the political climate, such as the promulgation of the law of the Superior Council for Defence and Security, the drawing up of the penal and criminal codes and the confirmation by the parliament of the nomination of an Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice for Timor-Leste, and to deal with the issue of religious education. We pay tribute to the great maturity that the Timorese parties have shown in dealing with those delicate issues.

The ongoing improvement of the political, social and economic situation in Timor-Leste and the commitment of the Timorese Government to achieve the Millennium Development Goals are very encouraging, as is the ongoing strengthening of good-neighbourly relations with Indonesia and Australia. In this regard we particularly welcome visit of the President of Indonesia to Timor-Leste and the signature on that occasion of the Provisional Agreement on the Borderline. We hope that the demarcation of the border will be completed very soon. The deadline established by the two sides shows that both want this dossier to make progress, and we encourage them in that.

All of those positive aspects convince us that Timor-Leste has turned a decisive corner in its march towards establishing democracy and sustained economic growth and sustainable development. That significant progress augers well for the future of the country.

In conclusion, Benin would like to join all those who have called on the international community to maintain its commitment to Timor-Leste to find the resources to respond to the major needs that remain and for which the Secretary-General has indicated that appropriate international support is needed. The following areas, we feel, should be given particular attention: strengthening the legal system, particularly with regard to serious crime; building up the professionalism of the national police; and setting up an alternative arrangement to compensate for the non-deployment of the auxiliary security force recommended by the Secretary-General to deal with border infractions and the withdrawal of military group — the only unit responsible for maintaining the roads from Dili to the border — and for the departure of the medical group.

All those elements will have a decisive impact on the future of the young Timorese nation and on the consolidation of what has been achieved. We urge the United Nations to assist the Timorese authorities in the mobilization of resources to provide an optimal solution that will be commensurate with the vital

interests and legitimate aspirations of the Timorese people.

Mr. Holliday (United States of America): The United States welcomes the Secretary-General's end of mandate report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) (S/2005/310) and also thanks Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his presentation to the Council. I also wish to extend a particular welcome to Ambassador Guterres.

UNMISET has done an outstanding job, and we would like to commend all who have contributed. In particular, we wish to thank Special Representative Hasegawa for his leadership and commitment. The people and the Government of Timor-Leste have come a remarkable distance in the short time since independence. Their spirit and determination is admirable. We would also like to recognize the substantial achievement on the part of the international community, which clearly demonstrates a model for successful peacekeeping.

It is now time to move on to supporting Timor-Leste in building its own capacity for self-reliance and self-governance. We fully appreciate the challenges that Timor-Leste will continue to face as a new State. It will continue to need concrete support from its friends, including the United States, for some time to come. We hope that the support of the new special political mission — the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) — will provide the additional assistance and skills transfer necessary for the Timorese to achieve further self-sufficiency. As we stated last February, this transition from peacekeeping to a sustainable development framework represents an extremely significant and positive milestone in the history of Timor-Leste.

We remain committed to achieving credible accountability for the crimes committed against humanity in 1999, and we look forward to the upcoming report of the Secretary-General's Commission of Experts tasked with reviewing current judicial processes and recommending additional measures, if necessary. We would like to commend the Serious Crimes Unit for its thorough and careful work and to again express our concern about proper handling of crucial evidence gathered by that body. In that context, it is imperative that the United Nations preserve a full copy of the Serious Crimes Unit files, as specified in resolution 1599 (2005). We welcome the decision of the Secretary-General to maintain a core international staff to ensure that the Serious Crimes Unit files are copied.

Since the report of the Commission of Experts will not be completed until after the closure of UNMISET on 20 May, we would support a delay in the liquidation of the Serious Crimes Unit until the Council can consider the recommendations of the Commission of Experts. We hope that the Government of Timor-Leste and UNOTIL, as well as Timor-Leste's bilateral partners, will provide all necessary facilities for the staff to continue to make a complete record of all the Serious Crimes Unit's papers.

As one of Timor-Leste's largest bilateral donors, our assistance has been focused on rehabilitating the local economy, promoting free and open markets, strengthening democracy, improving the judicial sector and training the police and military forces. We hope that Timor-Leste's bilateral and multilateral partners will continue to work with the people and Government of that country to further institutional capacity-building and security-sector training.

It is important that the Government of Timor-Leste take increasingly more responsibility for the nation's future. During this final year of specialized United Nations political assistance through UNOTIL, we hope that the Mission will be able to transfer the necessary skills to build Timor-Leste's capacity to provide for its own security, with a special focus on policing.

Mr. Mayoral (Argentina) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I wish to thank you, Madam President, for having convened this debate on Timor-Leste. I also wish to thank Mr. Annabi for presenting the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/310) and to congratulate Mr. Hasegawa for his work as Head of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET).

As we have said on other occasions, we feel that the experience of the United Nations in Timor-Leste was extremely positive. The successive missions deployed by the Organization to that territory over the last two five-year periods have made a significant contribution to the process of Timor-Leste's transition to independence and to the consolidation of its institutions. Of course, none of that would have been possible without the commitment of the people and Government of Timor-Leste in consolidating a

democratic and viable State in such a short period of time. President Gusmão and Prime Minister Alkatiri and Mr. Ramos-Horta, and other Timorese leaders such as Ambassador Guterres, deserve our recognition, as do the whole of the people of the country.

Despite all the significant progress, it is clear that the help of the international community will continue to be necessary in coming years to ensure that what has been achieved will be sustainable over time and to continue building on that base, as detailed in the Secretary-General's report. This was also the approach followed by the Security Council in adopting resolution 1599 (2005) establishing the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). We would have liked the resolution to also have included deployment of more military officers, as had been recommended at the time by the Secretary-General and requested by the Government of Timor-Leste.

With regard to this and other aspects of resolution 1599 (2005), we agree with the report saying that with effect from 20 May there will be a vacuum in some of the areas covered until now by international support. We believe the Security Council should be prepared to react rapidly and flexibly in case circumstances require the country to seek international assistance to maintain security and stability.

We believe that the signing of a comprehensive agreement concerning the border between Indonesia and Timor-Leste continues to be a matter of priority. The strengthening of the relations between Timor-Leste and its neighbours, particularly Indonesia, is vital. President Yudhoyono's visit to Timor-Leste in early April was an additional step on the correct path being taken by both countries. We are pleased that on that occasion, the President of Indonesia reaffirmed his country's commitment to resolving the issues outstanding between them, particularly the refugees in Nusa Tenggara and the demarcation of the maritime and land borders between the two countries.

With regard to the maritime border, we hope that a satisfactory solution can also be achieved in the negotiations between Australia and Timor-Leste and that the utilization of the natural resources of the continental shelf will help the people of Timor-Leste. We must not forget that the country ranks the lowest in Asia in the human development index and urgently needs the additional resources that could come from the exploitation of the Timor Sea's natural resources.

With respect to the bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission agreed to by both parties on 9 March, we reaffirm Argentina's support for all initiatives that can help to clarify the terrible events of the past and that can lead to genuine reconciliation between the peoples, although we are aware that time is needed for that process to move forward. We also believe that reconciliation must not be achieved at the expense of justice; there must be no impunity. We believe that the quest for justice also requires knowledge of the truth. We support the work of the Commission of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General, and we hope that it can carry out its task in fruitful collaboration with the new Truth and Friendship Commission.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm Argentina's firm support for Timor-Leste in the process of institution-building and in its efforts to build a democratic society and to promote sustainable economic and social development. Although we believe that the primary responsibility in attaining those objectives lies with the people and the leaders of Timor-Leste, the international community also has an important role to play. That is why we support the maintenance of a substantial United Nations presence in Timor-Leste for as long as necessary. We pledge to continue to explore other options in case the significant progress achieved to date should be put at risk.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I, too, should like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his detailed briefing and for his presentation of the end of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) (S/2005/310). I also wish to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, and to the rest of the UNMISET staff for the remarkable work that they have accomplished during the Mission's mandate.

In recent months, thanks to the efforts of the Timorese Government and people and to UNMISET's valuable assistance, Timor-Leste has continued to make progress in various areas. We have noted with satisfaction the accomplishments and progress achieved during the final consolidation phase, amply illustrated by the successful local elections and the considerable strengthening of the country's public institutions.

We are also pleased at the quality of the bilateral relations between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, which

have seen real improvement in recent months because of the initiatives undertaken at the highest level by Presidents Gusmão and Yudhoyono. We welcome that positive development in the relations between the two countries, and we congratulate them on the decision to establish a Truth and Friendship Commission and on the signing of the agreement covering 96 per cent of the land border. We encourage both Governments to continue to address the borders issue and other outstanding bilateral issues.

In addition, we welcome the progress made in the negotiations between Timor-Leste and Australia concerning offshore oil deposits, whose exploitation could greatly assist Timor-Leste's economic development.

However, the progress made by the Timorese needs to be consolidated. Assistance is needed in certain key areas such as justice, human rights and support for police and for other public services. UNMISET's mandate ends on 20 May, and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), established by resolution 1599 (2005), will make it possible to continue United Nations assistance in the areas of institutional capacity-building and developing the rule of law. Timor will also need financial support from the international community and from multilateral and bilateral donors so that it can attain the objectives of its national development plan and to ensure long-term stability.

We are confident that the Timorese people and leaders will be successful in their nation-building effort and in rebuilding their country's economy.

Mr. Johnston (United Kingdom): I should like to join others in thanking the Assistant Secretary-General for his briefing and, through him, to thank the Secretary-General for his end of mandate report (S/2005/310) on this important United Nations success story.

Like its European Union colleagues, the United Kingdom fully associates itself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union presidency.

As this will be the last Council discussion of Timor-Leste during the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), I wish to join others in paying tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa; to his predecessor, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma; and to all the people of UNMISET for the excellent work that they have done and for the help that they have provided to the people of Timor and to the international community over the past few years.

With the establishment of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), United Nations activities in that country move into a new phase. The Organization will now be in a position to refocus and concentrate its efforts on areas where the people of East Timor still require targeted assistance. We look forward, over the course of the one-year mandate, to further progress being made towards achieving the goal of self-sufficiency, in particular through training and mentoring activities.

Given the importance of the border issue, we are particularly pleased that training of the Border Patrol Unit will be a priority under UNOTIL's mandate. We welcome the assurance that the work of military advisers and police advisers assisting the Border Patrol Unit will be closely coordinated, and we hope that the work of the police advisers will also be coordinated with the activities of all the donors working in the field of police development and training.

In relation to the border, and more generally in relation to Timor-Leste, we would underline – as others have done — the continuing importance of bilateral commitments from the international community to reinforce the multilateral assistance from the United Nations.

On the issue of serious crimes, we look forward to the forthcoming report by the Secretary-General's Commission of Experts, and we welcome the news that Indonesia has now agreed to issue visas to allow the Commission to visit Jakarta. We welcome the fact that measures are being taken to safeguard the institutional knowledge of the existing serious crimes process, and we support the comments of the Secretary-General on the need to respect the assurances of confidentiality which have been provided to witnesses as part of that process. It is obviously important, as others have said, that the core staff of the Serious Crimes Unit will be retained to continue the crucial work of protecting and safeguarding the information for as long as is necessary.

Finally, a word of thanks and congratulations go to the Timorese themselves, who have achieved so much in the past few years. The Secretary-General's

report highlights the range of United Nations actors who are supporting their efforts in East Timor, but the people themselves also deserve our thanks for the contribution they are making to this important development.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): First of all, I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for presenting the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the United Nations Mission of Support in Timor-Leste (UNMISET), which are quite promising.

Important progress has been made in the implementation of UNMISET's mandate in the last few years. The security situation is calm and stable, although incidents can occur and will have to be dealt with accordingly. However, it is a fact that, after 20 May, a new phase will begin in United Nations commitments as regards the fulfilment of Timorese aspirations to the creation of a functioning, viable and democratic State.

Enthusiasm about the success of the United Nations presence must not lead us to lose sight of the challenges still facing that country. The foundations for the Timorese State have now been laid. Nevertheless, there are urgent tasks that must still be carried out in order to ensure the minimum required conditions for the success of the transition in the country and the full exercise of sovereignty by its people. Timor-Leste is a country mired in poverty and in urgent need of international assistance in the socio-economic, security and political fields. Overall cooperation and support are still required in a vast array of critical areas.

International responsibilities vis-à-vis the country are by no means over, and my country stands ready to do its share as we continue to enhance our bilateral cooperation with the Timorese Government.

Timor-Leste requires a smooth transition to a situation conducive to the preservation of stability and security as well as continuity in the strengthening of its national institutions and State administration. The progress achieved so far cannot be jeopardized.

Brazil welcomes and fully supports the creation of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) as the successor mission to UNMISET.

Challenges related to the transition towards a post-conflict situation in Timor-Leste and to the promotion of rehabilitation and the implementation of peacebuilding measures, including the establishment of development strategies, will represent a test for the United Nations and the international community. We trust that stability will be preserved in the country as the democratic process evolves and reconciliation efforts gain momentum.

We also welcome the signing of the Provisional Agreement on the Borderline by the Foreign Ministers of Timor-Leste and Indonesia, which came into effect on 8 May, as well as the establishment on 9 March of the Truth and Friendship Commission by Presidents Gusmão and Yudhoyono and Prime Minister Alkatiri.

Brazil welcomes the holding of local elections last March in the eastern districts, which bodes well for the future of political parties in Timor-Leste. The careful handling of problems related to religious education in school programmes reflects maturity and a promising ability on the part of the Timorese Government to overcome potentially divisive issues in a peaceful manner.

We recognize the important role to be played in this new phase by the United Nations development and humanitarian agencies and by the donor community, especially neighbouring countries such as Australia, Indonesia and New Zealand and the small islands members of the Pacific Group. In our view, providing assistance to promote Timor-Leste's long-term development is the best way to ensure that violence does not recur in the future.

Brazil appreciates in particular the efforts of the Governments of Indonesia and of Australia to resolve pending issues and strengthen bilateral ties with Timor-Leste based on friendship and respect, including the delimitation of their borders and the conclusion of mutually beneficial agreements concerning the sharing of common natural resources.

An open-ended United Nations presence in Timor-Leste is not warranted. Yet we believe that only one step should be taken at a time. In that context, income-generating projects to minimize any potential adverse impacts caused by the decrease in United Nations personnel and expenditures are more than ever necessary.

It is essential to maintain the current level of public services following the end of UNMISET's mandate. Strides have been made towards the Timorization of the public administration, and important progress has been achieved in building the

capacity of Timorese State institutions during the consolidation phase. It is critical for the future of the country to strengthen the rule of law, including the justice system and law-enforcement institutions, especially the police. That is a precondition not only for ensuring the observance of human rights but also for providing a solid basis for a sound economic system.

Despite improved relations between the Indonesian Armed Forces and the Timorese Border Patrol Unit, there is an urgent need for the establishment of an effective mechanism for the management of the border, to replace the military liaison arrangement, which will expire in June 2005.

In the area of criminal justice, Timor-Leste still faces a serious lack of specialized personnel. We stress the need to conclude as soon as possible the pending activities of the Serious Crimes Unit with respect to finalizing the process of handing over all relevant documentation related to those serious crimes to the Timorese authorities.

It is also important to address other legal problems that might inhibit economic recovery and development, particularly as concerns the need for clear and stable legislation in various domains.

We cannot rely solely on voluntary contributions. It is necessary to secure a predictable source of funding, as rightly pointed out in the Secretary-General's report. We call on donors to disburse all pledged funds as soon as possible. Now is the time to protect the huge investment we all have already made. In that context, the major factor that must guide the renewal of UNOTIL's mandate in future should be the capacity of the Government of Timor to carry out its State duties.

I wish also to take this opportunity to commend once again the excellent and professional work performed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sukehiro Hasegawa, and his team of civilian and military personnel. We sincerely hope that the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations will continue to attach a high priority to Timor-Leste.

Mr. Smirnov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for presenting the report and for his briefing.

The United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) completed its work on 20 May, achieving impressive success. Its contribution to the establishment and development of Timor-Leste's core State institutions cannot be overemphasized. By virtue, to a large extent, of the tireless efforts of United Nations peacekeepers and of police and civilian advisers, the capacities of the Timorese Government and its administrative institutions, armed forces and police have increased considerably, and many State Government tasks can now be addressed independently by Timor-Leste.

We express our sincere appreciation to the leadership of the United Nations Mission, headed by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hasegawa, and also to the entire staff — past and present — of the Mission for their excellent work.

Despite the intensive joint efforts of the Timorese, the United Nations and other international partners, Timor-Leste continues to require multifaceted external assistance in order to ensure its security, stability and development.

For those specific reasons, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1599 (2005) authorizing the establishment of a United Nations special political mission in Timor-Leste. We expect that, in the coming 12 months, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste will successfully carry out the tasks before it and assist in the building of that young nation.

In that connection, the United Nations system, working with specialized international bodies, will need to continue to provide assistance to the Timorese in order to ensure the sustainable development of the country.

To ensure lasting stability in Timor-Leste, it is important to maintain good-neighbourly, mutually beneficial relations with the countries of the region, above all with its neighbours. We welcome the steady improvement that has taken place in Timorese-Indonesian relations. We hope that the bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission, which will begin work soon, will continue further to broaden cooperation between the two States and contribute to the prompt addressing of the remaining outstanding issues.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Denmark.

I, too, would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for his briefing, and I would also like, through Mr. Annabi, to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the entire personnel of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) for their excellent work. The United Nations has contributed very significantly to the last five years' progress in Timor-Leste, and we fully support the continuing work of the United Nations in that country.

Denmark associates itself with the statement that the representative of Luxembourg will make shortly on behalf of the European Union.

My Government welcomes the continuing positive political developments in Timor-Leste. Recent events show that democracy in Timor-Leste is still fragile but also vibrant and functioning. Noticeable progress has been made in the electoral field through the holding of local elections and progress is reflected also in the National Parliament's endorsement of the first Provedor (or ombudsman), for Human Rights and Justice of Timor-Leste.

We further welcome the recent visit to Timor-Leste of the President of Indonesia and the subsequent signing by the Foreign Ministers of the two countries of a Provisional Agreement on the Borderline between their countries. Efforts to solve ail outstanding issues and to further improve and strengthen the relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia must continue.

My Government is concerned about the lack of progress in the fight against impunity. The issue of serious crimes committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 is a concern not only for the two countries, but also for the international community at large. The fight against impunity is of significant importance to the people of Timor-Leste and for the development of the country. The perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to justice.

In that respect, we welcome the recent visit by the Secretary-General's Commission of Experts to Timor-Leste and the expected visit to Indonesia by the Commission. We urge the two parties to fully cooperate with the expert Commission and look forward to the report of the Commission.

With the closure of UNMISET and the establishment of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), the focus of international assistance is now on peacebuilding and development in Timor-Leste. My Government supports an approach based on national ownership that places the people of Timor-Leste in the driver's seat. We therefore welcome the fact that the number of international United Nations advisers will be reduced over the coming months to give room for the Timorese to assert their leadership. We urge the United Nations to ensure a smooth transition from UNMISET to UNOTIL.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Australia, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Tesch (Australia): Thank you very much, Madam President, for convening this meeting. Let me also join others in thanking Mr. Annabi for the comprehensive briefing he has given the Council on the Secretary-General's end of mandate report on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) (S/2005/310).

As underlined in that report, Timor-Leste has come a long way from a very low base since achieving independence three years ago. Much has been done to build the necessary institutions and skills to allow Timor-Leste to move towards self-sufficiency. The successful conclusion of UNMISET's peacekeeping mandate in a few days' time, on 20 May, is testament to the progress that has been made and signals a new phase in Timor-Leste's development as a democratic and peaceful nation.

Australia congratulates Timor-Leste on its remarkable progress. There is no doubt that the United Nations, in partnership with the donor community, has played a key role in restoring security and stability in Timor-Leste. The engagement of the United Nations in Timor-Leste will be a case study of how the Organization can work and how it can make a difference. The United Nations should be proud of its efforts in Timor-Leste and we, like others, readily and gratefully acknowledge all of those who have contributed to that success. However, a great deal of the credit must also go to the people of Timor-Leste and to their leaders for their determination and hard work to consolidate the gains that they have made over the past five years. The help and good will of the Indonesian people and their Government has also contributed greatly to that end. We also wish to commend the efforts of the Governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia in developing productive relations and a cooperative approach to border management issues.

Australia has been at the forefront of international efforts to support Timor-Leste's transition to an independent and secure State. We coordinated and led the original multi-country International Force in East Timor to restore law and order in 1999. We have supported and contributed to all subsequent missions, from the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor to UNMISET, and we remain one of the largest bilateral donors to Timor-Leste, having provided $400 million in assistance since 1999. But it is clear that much more needs to be done to assist Timor-Leste to achieve self-sufficiency. Australia therefore welcomes Security Council resolution 1599 (2005) authorizing a special political mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), as a successor mission to UNMISET. UNOTIL will play an important role in continuing the transfer of necessary skills to Timor-Leste's institutions, but at the same time, the international community must remain engaged in Timor-Leste. In particular, further support must be provided to develop Timor-Leste's police and security forces and the legal and justice systems. Only through improvements in those critical areas can Timor-Leste achieve its long-term development goals.

As we mark the end of UNMISET's mandate, it is appropriate to reflect on the significant contribution the United Nations has made in Timor-Leste and on the progress that Timor-Leste has achieved. But we should not overlook the fact that the process of nation-building is not complete. The United Nations and the international community must remain committed to Timor-Leste over the longer term. Australia, for its part, will continue its long tradition of support for Timor-Leste to ensure its transition to secure and self-reliant statehood. As a neighbour and a friend, we can be relied upon to continue with that effort.

The President: I call now on the representative of Luxembourg.

Mr. Hoscheit (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Turkey and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union is pleased to have the opportunity today to make some observations on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Four days before its mandate expires, the European Union thanks Mr. Annabi for the report which he has just introduced, above all because we believe that the United Nations has achieved a great deal in supporting the Timorese people in their quest for peace, independence and development since the establishment of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) in 1999. Today's meeting is an occasion to remember all those who lost their lives to bring peace and freedom to others and to pay tribute to the dedication and professionalism of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), as well as to the leadership of the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, in assisting the people of Timor-Leste in their transition towards independence.

We also commend the entire personnel of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor for its invaluable contribution over the last three years to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to a sustainable development framework in Timor-Leste, under the able leadership of the successive Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma and Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa.

In its previous statement on this issue in February (see S/PV.5132), the European Union endorsed an adequate continued United Nations presence in Timor-Leste after the expiration of UNMISET's mandate. We welcome the adoption of resolution 1599 (2005) which established a one-year follow-on special political mission mandated, inter alia, to support the development of critical State institutions through specialized training and technical advice and to promote the rule of law, democratic governance and human rights. Through implementation of that mandate the mission will assist the Timorese in their continuing journey towards self-sustainability. Nevertheless, international assistance should complement the efforts of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) in supporting Timor Leste's public administration.

Today's meeting also allows for a review of the overall political situation in Timor-Leste three years after its independence. Of course, the European

Union's assessment has not changed substantially since the end of February, when I last had the honour of taking the floor in this Chamber on the question of Timor-Leste. Our message largely remains the same: tangible progress has been achieved in numerous areas, but challenges remain in others, and further international assistance is essential. In that context, priority should be given to the implementation of quick-impact projects.

The European Union welcomes the peaceful holding of local elections in three further districts and the progress achieved in reinforcing the legal framework of Timor-Leste. Efforts to strengthen the judicial system should be continued in order to ensure real access to justice for all citizens and the respect of due process. The recent visit of the President of Indonesia to Timor-Leste demonstrates that relations between the two neighbours continue to be strengthened.

However, we remain concerned at the lack of progress in the fight against impunity. Those responsible for serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste in 1999 must be held accountable for their crimes, in conformity with Security Council resolutions 1573 (2004) and 1599 (2005). In that context, the European Union urges all parties to cooperate fully with the Commission of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to review the judicial process in the two countries. We look forward to the Commission's upcoming report and recommendations proposing ways to address the issue, including how examination of the question could assist the Truth and Friendship Commission recently created by Indonesia and Timor-Leste. We hope that the two commissions can work together to ensure that justice is done.

The European Union welcomes the fact that the overall security situation in Timor-Leste has remained generally calm and stable, while recognizing the need for the international community to remain vigilant in that regard.

Since 1999, the European Union and its member States have provided vital assistance to Timor-Leste, contributing nearly €700 million to its development. That represents half of the foreign aid the country has received. The support provided by the European Union covers all sectors and, in the near future, as a new member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States, Timor-Leste will also benefit from the European Development Fund, which supports the signatories of the EU-ACP Cooperation Agreement.

I would like to conclude by expressing our appreciation for the efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste and the determination of the Timorese people to build a viable, just and democratic State. The European Union is committed to remaining a reliable partner in assisting Timor-Leste to achieve long-term stability and sustainable economic development, in close coordination with other bilateral and multilateral donors.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): My delegation congratulates you, Madam, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of May and for arranging this open debate. Before I continue, let me thank the Secretary-General for his report contained in document S/2005/310.

My delegation would also like to express its appreciation to the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his comprehensive briefing and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for his dedication to his assignment and his leadership in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) since last year. We thank him for bringing that mandate to a successful conclusion.

Indonesia acknowledges the work that UNMISET has done over the past two years, particularly in helping to provide the young nation with the assistance required to meet the goals of political stability, security and self-reliance. We have always underlined that the objective of UNMISET's mandate was to contribute significantly to the efforts to guide Timor-Leste to self-reliance and self-sufficiency. The core administrative structures critical to the viability and political stability of Timor-Leste now function well, and we are pleased that, by and large, the basic objectives of UNMISET's mandate have been met.

Remarkable progress has been made by the Government and the people of Timor-Leste under their forward-looking leaders in building their own country in the short period since it obtained full sovereignty in

May 2002. The new State has become a peaceful, politically dynamic and stable nation. It also continues to make progress in economic and social development, the strengthening of law and order and the consolidation of democracy. However, the challenges ahead are daunting for Timor-Leste. The country still has the lowest levels of human development in Asia, and continued efforts will be needed to strengthen its national capacity to consolidate political stability, strengthen the fabric of social harmony and create sustainable economic development. Despite the successful completion of UNMISET's mandate in helping Timor-Leste towards self-reliance, continued international assistance is still needed.

In that regard, my delegation is pleased to note that the Security Council has established a special political mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), for a period of one year. The objectives of the mission will include further support of the development of critical State institutions, the development of the police and the Border Patrol Unit and the provision of training. It is our hope that UNOTIL will strengthen the consolidation phase that UNMISET began one year ago and, during its one-year mandate, will plan assiduously for a smooth transition to the development assistance framework that is envisaged by the Council in resolution 1599 (2005).

UNOTIL has a very important assignment ahead of it. In order to ensure its success, and in the best interests of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, UNOTIL should be able to deliver the needed assistance in an effective and efficient manner. That is particularly important as Timor-Leste constructs and consolidates efficient and effective State structures, which are crucial to democracy and development. It is also vital to the mission that it recognize the importance in every aspect of its work of giving the Timorese a sense of ownership and participation. Indonesia would warmly support that approach and would do its best as a friendly neighbour to provide whatever assistance it can. In that regard, permit me to mention that our training of 100 Timorese police officers, who are already in Indonesia, will begin soon.

As the Council well knows, Indonesia and Timor-Leste have continued to enjoy excellent bilateral ties marked by the exchange of visits at the highest levels of leadership, extensive cooperation in many fields and progress in addressing residual issues. Following the joint declaration issued by the leaders of the two countries in Bali on 14 December 2004, in which they affirmed their desire and determination to enhance the stable and mutually beneficial relationship between their two countries, the exchange of visits among the leaders of the two countries continues. The latest was the visit of President Yudhoyono to Dili last month. That visit laid a firmer foundation for bilateral relations and contributed to reconciliation between the peoples of the two countries.

In that connection, we note that bilateral cooperation has not only deepened but expanded. The Joint Commission at the level of Foreign Ministers remains instrumental in furthering bilateral cooperation in the economic, social, cultural, security and educational fields. Its subsidiary bodies, which deal with a variety of cooperation issues, are active throughout the year, and their work is reviewed at the annual meeting of the Commission. I would also like to mention that last month, President Xanana Gusmão of Timor-Leste was invited to attend the Asian-African Summit and he did so, thereby bringing Timor-Leste into the wider cooperation context.

Let me now turn to the issue of the Commission on Truth and Friendship. As a joint effort of the Governments of Indonesia and Timor-Leste to address some of the issues of our common past, in particular that of reported human rights violations in 1999, it is our conviction that it is our responsibility and our unique role to address that period of our history in a way that will appeal to the peoples of both nations. We continue to believe that the Commission remains the best mechanism to provide an acceptable solution to heal the wounds and unload the burden of the past in order to continue to foster bilateral relations and friendship among our peoples.

The terms of reference of the Commission on Truth and Friendship were announced in a joint declaration by the Presidents of both countries on 9 March 2005, and various stakeholders in both countries, including their parliaments, were consulted. The Commission enjoys the support of a wide spectrum of society and meets the domestic requirements and constitutional provisions of both of our countries. The recruitment of its members will be completed very soon. The process is being conducted very carefully in order to ensure that only candidates of high credibility who meet the required qualifications become members.

In this regard, my Government is also aware that Security Council resolution 1599 (2005) adopted last month requested the Secretary-General's Commission of Experts to explore possible ways of assisting the work of the Commission on Truth and Friendship. As a token of my Government's cooperation, in particular in facilitating the work of the Commission of Experts in this regard, my Government has invited members of the Commission of Experts to visit Indonesia from 18 to 20 May. We look forward to the positive contributions of the Commission of Experts to the work of the Commission on Truth and Friendship in bringing closure to that residual issue.

I would also like to say a few words about the boundary issue. As reflected in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/310) and as mentioned in the statements of other colleagues, during the course of the visit of President Yudhoyono to Timor-Leste last month the Foreign Ministers of both nations signed the Provisional Agreement on the Borderline. The Agreement established a provisional borderline covering approximately 96 per cent of the land border and came into effect on 8 May 2005. Regarding the remaining 4 per cent, which is located along the Oecussi enclave border, the Technical Subcommittee has continued to hold discussions and met again this month following the signing of the Agreement. Next month, the job of placing border markers along the agreed sections will commence.

Let me point out that the agreement by both sides on most of the land border will substantially facilitate border management and cooperation in the field of border security. Therefore, both countries are now in a better position to deal with any issues relating to the border within a bilateral framework.

In conclusion, I would like to express my confidence that, given the cooperation and assistance of the international community, within both bilateral and multilateral frameworks, Timor-Leste will quickly become self-reliant.

Mr. Mohd. Radzi (Malaysia): My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for his report (S/2005/310) on the ending of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the preparations for the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), whose establishment was authorized by Security Council resolution 1599 (2005), for a one-year period until 20 May 2006.

My delegation also thanks Mr. Hédi Annabi, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his clear presentation of that report earlier this afternoon. We commend Special Representative Hasegawa and members of the civilian, military and police components of UNMISET for their dedication and invaluable contribution to the process of nation-building in Timor-Leste. Malaysia takes special pride in the fact that we were able to actively contribute to UNMISET by having a Malaysian assigned as a Force Commander and by contributing military and police personnel, among others, to serve under the banner of the United Nations in Timor-Leste.

Malaysia fully appreciates the important roles played by UNMISET in providing security and facilitating the country's advancement towards progress and development. We must acknowledge that UNMISET has made tremendous contributions toward the development of political, economic, social, legal and judicial institutions in Timor-Leste. In particular, the Mission has played crucial role in assisting in building the capacity of Timorese State institutions during the consolidation phase of UNMISET. These advances could not have been achieved without the full commitment, determination and strong resolve of the country's leadership and the support of the Timorese people in general, coupled with sustained assistance and cooperation from the international community.

We recall that the previous report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/99) indicated that international assistance would continue to be required beyond the expiration of UNMISET's mandate on 20 May 2005 to ensure that the underpinnings of a viable State are firmly in place. We share the view that more remains to be done. We therefore urge that continuing support be channelled to the Government of Timor-Leste to sustain the remarkable gains achieved thus far and to enable the young nation to continue to build on its progress. As the ending of UNMISET's mandate will open another chapter in the nation-building of Timor-Leste, Malaysia welcomes the Council's decision to remain engaged by maintaining an operational presence on the ground through UNOTIL until 20 May 2006.

My delegation notes that even though UNOTIL may not be able to secure all of the resources suggested

by the Secretary-General in his previous report, we share his optimism that the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste will nonetheless be in a position to assist in the key areas — notably the judiciary, public administration, law enforcement, security and stability of Timor-Leste — through the generous cooperation and contribution of the international community.

In that connection, we all should seriously consider the Secretary-General's call for the international community to seek alternative ways to meet crucial requirements that will remain following the withdrawal of UNMISET. In consolidating the gains achieved thus far, it is essential that the transition from the phase of peacekeeping operations resolving conflicts to the next phase, development, be conducted with the cooperation and contribution of all bilateral and multilateral partners. In that regard, Malaysia remains committed to do its utmost within its modest capacity to contribute towards further assisting Timor-Leste in fulfilling its nation-building endeavours, including through the continuation of bilateral technical assistance.

Finally, I wish to emphasize that it is incumbent upon the international community to continue to lend its vital assistance to ensure the success of UNOTIL as it undertakes its one-year follow-up mission, until 20 May 2006. As it focuses on the transfer of skills and knowledge to build the capacity of the public institutions in Timor-Leste, there will be areas where the international community can contribute to further the development and strengthening of the rule of law, including justice, human rights and support for the national police and other aspects of public administration.

The assistance of the international community will also be needed in areas beyond the support provided by UNOTIL, including security needs to promote stability and ensure the safety of United Nations personnel. Malaysia is convinced that, with the efforts of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste, along with the support of the United Nations and the international community, Timor-Leste will continue to make progress in its nation-building endeavours.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his final report (S/2005/310) on the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), as well as Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his presentation. I take this opportunity to praise the dedicated efforts of the civilian, military and police components of UNMISET, under the leadership of Special Representative Hasegawa, and to congratulate them for their many achievements in Timor-Leste.

Portugal subscribes to the statement made by the representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. I will only add a few comments of our own.

First, we welcome the important work being carried out by the independent Commission of Experts appointed by the Secretary-General to review the prosecution of serious human rights violations committed in Timor-Leste in 1999. In that context, we look forward to considering its final recommendations.

We also note the positive developments in Timor-Leste's relations with its neighbours, in particular the highly symbolic visit of President Yudhoyono to Dili last April. We welcome the progress towards resolving issues key to the Timorese, such as finalizing the demarcation of land and maritime borders.

We welcome resolution 1599 (2005), which was adopted by the Council on 28 April and which establishes a one-year follow-on special political mission in Timor-Leste.

Although the security environment remains calm and stable, we believe it is important for the Security Council to follow the situation on the ground with particular attention, taking into account the removal of the last United Nations troops.

Timor-Leste is in a critical period of its peacebuilding process. The report of the Secretary-General clearly outlines a number of areas still in need of international assistance. In particular, police capacity-building is of great concern to us. In that regard, Portugal is currently working closely with the Secretariat in order to coordinate our offer to provide bilateral support, in the form of 30 gendarmerie officers, in the efforts of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) to assist the national police.

My final comment pertains to the responsibility of the international community and of the United Nations in this important period of Timor-Leste's recent history. Timor-Leste should continue to benefit from the organized and coherent support of the United

Nations system. We are all aware that, despite the significant steps that the country has taken in institution-building and in becoming a viable State, much more remains to be done. International support, both bilateral and multilateral, must be forthcoming. We have achieved a lot, and we must safeguard that investment by ensuring that Timor-Leste continues to benefit from the assistance of the international community.

In that context, I would like to point out that, from 1999 to April 2005, Portugal invested about $450 million in bilateral investment, development programmes and technical-military cooperation in Timor-Leste. Moreover, a significant part of the equipment utilized by the former Portuguese military contingent in UNMISET, amounting to over $20 million in value, was donated by Portugal to the Government of Timor-Leste in June 2004.

Our involvement, however, is far from being exclusively financial. With the same objective of practical involvement, Portuguese nationals in their thousands have taken part in UNMISET — and in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor before that — from peacekeepers to civilian police observers to civil servants and volunteers. Portugal is ready to maintain that level of support to Timor-Leste. We encourage other countries to do the same as we continue to closely follow developments in Timor-Leste, in particular as the transition from UNMISET to UNOTIL is carried out.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Guterres (Timor-Leste): Allow me to congratulate you, Madam, and your country on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, as well as to wish you every success. We would like to thank you and the other members of the Council for the opportunity to share our thoughts on an issue of great importance to my country.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2005/310) on the end of the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET). Also, we thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his comprehensive briefing.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, the Deputy Special Representative, Mr. Atul Khare, and all the military and civilian members of UNMISET for their invaluable contribution to peace, stability, justice and capacity-building in Timor-Leste. As we enter this new, and final, phase of the United Nations mission, we would like also to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries.

We welcome the adoption of resolution 1599 (2005) and the mandate of the new mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). We thank the Council for extending the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste for a final year. At the same time, we would like to say that we share the views set out in paragraph 31 of the report of the Secretary-General, concerning the absence of provision for a back-up security force in resolution 1599 (2005). While we recognize our insufficient capacity, the Government of Timor-Leste is deeply committed to peace and stability. We will make every effort to protect all United Nations personnel.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's assessment that the justice and finance sectors should be considered priority areas when allocating the 45 adviser posts to the various State institutions.

The political and social environment in Timor-Leste remains peaceful and dynamic. Last month, the Catholic Church organized a demonstration that lasted for 20 days. During that time, despite some fears of instability, the Government and the President initiated a very constructive dialogue with Church leaders in which an agreement witnessed by President Xanana Gusmão was signed between Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri and Bishops Basilio Nascimento and Alberto Ricardo. That was a very challenging time for our new democratic institutions; but, in the words of the Prime Minister, it was a victory for the people of Timor-Leste. According to that agreement, the Government will include the teaching of religion as a regular discipline in the school curriculum. It also gives parents the right to choose such instruction at the time they enrol their children at school. At the same time, a joint working group will be created to follow up the implementation of the agreement and to deal with matters of concern.

The local elections held in the eastern and central parts of my country were very successful and further consolidated democracy in Timor-Leste.

The President of Indonesia, His Excellency Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, paid an official visit to Timor-Leste on 8 and 9 April. The visit reinforced the friendship, solidarity and cooperation between our two countries and peoples. The two Governments are committed to resolving remaining issues of mutual concern and to looking to the future. The Government of Timor-Leste welcomed the decision of the Government of Indonesia to provide training to Timorese police officers in Indonesia and to continue the scholarship programme for Timorese students, also in Indonesia. On the occasion of the visit, the foreign ministers of our two countries, Mr. Hassan Wirajuda and Mr. Ramos-Horta, signed a provisional Agreement covering 96 per cent of the land border. The Timorese people were deeply touched by the visit of the President of Indonesia to the Santa Cruz cemetery.

Regarding negotiations on the maritime boundaries and the sharing of gas and oil resources with our southern neighbour, Australia, we completed another round of negotiations last week in Sydney, Australia, and the Government of Timor-Leste is carefully studying the proposals in order to achieve a fair and just agreement.

At the same time, we have consolidated our relations with countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, as evidenced by the successful official visit by Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Ramos-Horta, to Malaysia and Singapore.

Regarding issues of justice and human rights, the Governments of Timor-Leste and of Indonesia created — as the Council well knows — a bilateral Truth and Friendship Commission on 9 March this year.

At the same time, we have cooperated fully with the independent Commission of Experts established by the Secretary-General. During its recent visit to Timor-Leste from 5 to 10 April, the Commission met with leaders of the country, as well as with civil society and with relatives of the victims.

We would also like to welcome the decision by the Government of Indonesia to invite the independent Commission of Experts to visit Jakarta this month.

To consolidate achievements in the area of human rights and justice, the National Parliament endorsed, on 29 March, Mr. Sebastiao Dias Ximenes as Ombudsman for Human Rights and Justice — the very first in our history.

While we have achieved progress in various areas, Timor-Leste remains one of the poorest nations in the world, with a very high rate of unemployment and a low gross national per capita income of about $520, as recognized by the World Bank's "Green Book", published last month. Despite all of those economic indicators, the Government of Timor-Leste is determined to create a better life for its people. To that end, the support of the international community is necessary. That support was reaffirmed during the most recent meeting of development partners in April 2005 in Dili.

In conclusion, we would like to express our gratitude to the Security Council, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, United Nations agencies and the international community at large for their continued commitment to and support for peace and stability, democracy, development, human rights and the rule of law in Timor-Leste. We wish every success to the new mission, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

The President: I give the floor to Mr. Annabi to respond to the statements that have been made.

Mr. Annabi: I will gladly convey to the Special Representative and to all the staff of the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor the kind words of Council members regarding the work of the Mission over the past three years. There is no doubt that Timor-Leste has achieved a lot in very little time, and the United Nations is proud to have had the privilege of accompanying the people of Timor-Leste in their efforts over the past five and a half years to build sustainable and democratic State institutions.

Some speakers described the role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste as a model for successful peacekeeping and as a remarkable success story. Success in the real world, of course, is often less well remembered than some of the setbacks that we encounter. Let us hope that this success will be duly remembered. But at a time when the United Nations is closing a chapter in the history of its involvement in East Timor and opening a new one, I think that we should remember most of all the exemplary work of Sergio Vieira de Mello, who devoted two and a half of the last years of his life to assisting the people of East

Timor to prepare for and achieve their long-cherished goal of sovereignty and independence. He will remain a role model for all those who believe in what the United Nations stands for.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for his comments.

There are no more speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.